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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000476

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SUBJECT: CNDD LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR PRESIDENTIAL BID

Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) Embassy has been picking up numerous indications that CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara is laying the groundwork for a potential announcement of his candidacy for president in the upcoming elections, despite previous public pledges that he would not do so. From mobilization of government officials in the interior to new political parties and movements, to Dadis' own statements, it is increasingly clear that the CNDD is actively strategizing to maintain its grip on power well into 2010, and likely beyond. General Abdoul Aziz' election in Mauritania is being closely watched by Guineans, and Dadis has already started drawing parallels. A number of contacts are convinced that it is only a matter of time before the CNDD makes its intentions known. END SUMMARY.

RALLYING IN THE INTERIOR

¶2. (C) Alessandre Camara, youth representative to the National Council of Civil Society Organizations (CNOSC), told A/DCM on August 11 that a member of his NGO had recently traveled extensively throughout Guinea's interior to gauge public opinion with respect to elections. Camara stated that Dadis' support among the country's young people is clearly waning. However, he was concerned because the CNDD has reportedly started using local government officials (governors, prefects, and sous-prefects), most of whom are military officers assigned immediately after the coup, to promote the CNDD and Dadis. According to Camara, local government officials are organizing rallies calling for Dadis to announce his candidacy for a 2010 election.

POLITICAL PARTIES

¶3. (C) Other sources report that Dadis and the CNDD are quietly talking behind closed doors about how they can solidify their hold on power. Discussions have focused not only on whether or not Dadis should run, but also on whether it would be better to put forth a low-profile CNDD member or someone outside the CNDD who could be used as a "puppet."

¶4. (C) The July launching of the PNR political party, with its rumored connections to the CNDD (septel), may be linked to recent CNDD political strategy discussions. One source commented that the CNDD actually plans to create three or four different political parties that do not appear to be connected to each other or to the CNDD. These parties' main objective would be to undermine the strength of the larger opposition parties and ultimately sweep the elections by collectively winning the majority of votes. The CNDD reportedly thinks that by doing so, they will be able to fool both the Guinean population and the international community,

and put their hand-picked candidate into office.

AN EYE ON MAURITANIA

15. (C) However, Dadis may now be starting to think that such creative strategies are no longer necessary. General Abdoul Aziz' election in Mauritania, and the international community's reaction, is being closely watched by Guineans. The "Mauritanian example" is becoming an increasingly routine topic of discussion in meetings with contacts. During a national press conference on August 8, Dadis said "the international community says that it does not want a uniform in power, but brother General Abdoul Aziz was just officially and legally sworn into power in Mauritania." Dadis also commented that the French Secretary of State for Cooperation, Alain Joyandet, just visited and told Dadis he could not run for office, but then went on to Mauritania to applaud the swearing in of his military "brother."

16. (C) In the same August 8 press conference, Dadis made some pointed statements about his potential candidacy: "Many think that I am afraid to announce my candidacy. I want to make it clear. If the people ask me to run for president, I will satisfy their request. The people have not asked me yet. If I want to be a candidate, I will be. No one can prevent me from being a candidate. The international community cannot prevent me from doing it."

DADIS MUST STAY

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17. (C) Although Dadis is increasingly unpopular, he does have a certain following. A new, allegedly grassroots, pro-Dadis movement has recently taken off, calling itself the Movement Dadis Must Stay (MDDR). The group met with Commandant Moussa Keita, Permanent Secretary of the CNDD, at the People's Palace on August 12 in order to describe its agenda. Alie Maneh, President of the MDDR, reportedly told Keita that the MDDR is the parent-body of several associations sharing a common objective - the continued leadership of Dadis beyond 2010, with or without elections. The MDDR is opposed to holding elections in 2009 and says it will actively support Dadis' candidacy in any upcoming elections. Keita reportedly promised to work with the MDDR to help Dadis realize his vision for Guinea. (COMMENT. MDDR leader Alie Maneh is a member of former Prime Minister Lansana Kouyate's PEDN party, which is actively pushing to postpone elections to 2010. END COMMENT).

18. (SBU) Incidentally, Commandant Keita has also been making regular trips into the interior of the country, reportedly to generate support for Dadis. While in N'Zerekore last month, he said "Dadis or Death." In order to hold the August 12 meeting with the MDDR, Keita apparently bumped a meeting that Les Forces Vives were planning to hold in the same room, despite the fact that it had been scheduled well in advance.

AND OTHER COUNTER FORCES

19. (U) In addition to the MDDR, Guinea has recently witnessed the creation of the "Bloc of Patriotic Forces," which is reportedly spearheaded by former Prime Minister Lansana Kouyate. Claiming to encompass some twenty different political parties and civil society organizations, the Bloc is presenting itself as an alternative to Les Forces Vives. During a July 29 meeting at the People's Palace with the same Commandant Keita mentioned above, the Bloc's spokesperson said: "We...solemnly denounce the anti-democratic practices of...Les Forces Vives for its past attempts to try and speak

on behalf of all the components of Guinea's political class."

The speaker went on to state that the 2009 timeline for elections is unrealistic and suggested that elections be rescheduled for 2010.

¶10. (U) Commandant Keita responded to the MDDR's statements by saying that Dadis was "not aware of these realities and all these secret negotiations," emphasizing that the CNDD must reflect the will of the people.

COMMENT

¶11. (C) This is not the first time Dadis has alluded to his possible candidacy, but he seems to be getting bolder. Whether or not the CNDD is actually willing to put Dadis forth as a candidate is debatable, but it is almost certain that key CNDD members are looking at how they can consolidate their hold on power for the long term. Key contacts are convinced that it is only a matter of time before the CNDD's intentions are made clear. Commandant Keita's name seems to surface often, suggesting that he may be linked to some of these pro-Dadis movements/initiatives. END COMMENT.

BROKENDSHIRE